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FORT BELVOIR EMPLOYMENT GUIDE

WELCOME TO THE FORT BELVOIR CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION CENTER. Thank you for your interest in seeking employment with Fort Belvoir. If you are not sure how to apply for a Federal position, please read the following information.

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PURPOSE

This guide has been created to provide information to assist all persons interested in employment at Fort Belvoir. Fort Belvoir employs more than 5,000 civilians in many exciting careers in such areas as: Engineering, Computers, Chemistry, Physics, Finance, Electronics, as well as Clerical, Administrative, and Skilled Trade positions.

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Permanent Positions

If you are a first time prospective Federal employee and are looking for a permanent Federal job, the next few pages of this guide will be of tremendous assistance to you.

1. Regulations prohibit you from applying directly to this office for most permanent positions, unless you meet certain conditions, which will be described in item 2 below. The first step toward entering the government as a *permanent* civil service employee is to apply to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to have your name placed on the appropriate register according to your job qualifications and interest. OPM accepts applications for Federal employment based on the number of jobs Government agencies estimate they will fill in various locations over a period of time. OPM registers for jobs open and close depending on that need.

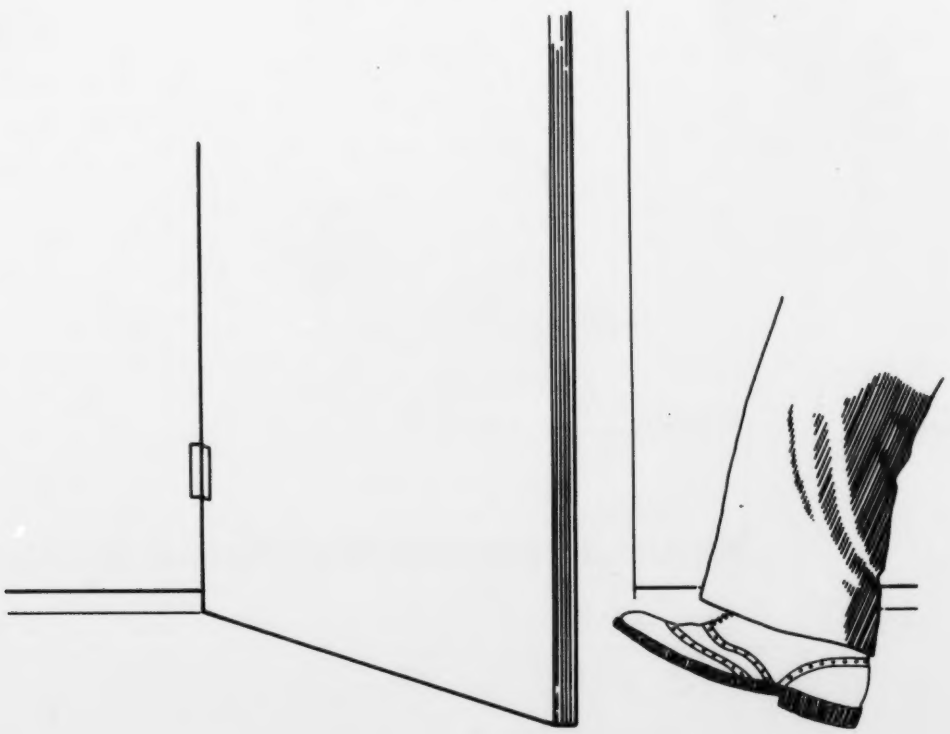
2. There are certain occupations and people for which we can hire directly without regard to the OPM register:

- Engineers from GS-05 through GS-11
- Computer Specialists (GS-11 and GS-12)
- Attorneys
- A Veteran Readjustment Act person (see pamphlet)
- A Handicapped individual (SCHEDULE A)
- An Overseas Executive Order appointee

Temporary Positions

If you have never worked for the Federal government and are interested in a temporary position, you can apply to our office for:

- most temporary positions up to GS-12
- all temporary Wage Grade positions



Some positions require a written test as well as your application. If you take a written test, you will receive a notice of your score and your name will go on an OPM register in the order of your score. If the job you apply for doesn't require a written test, your rating will be based on the experience, education and training you describe in your application. You will be notified of the status of your application by the OPM office.

For most scientific positions and most jobs at GS-9 and above, you will not receive a notice of your score at the time your application is processed; you will receive a letter acknowledging the receipt of your application and your name will go on the civil service list without a numerical rating. This office (Ft. Belvoir) periodically requests lists from OPM's register to fill particular jobs.

OPM will review your qualifications in relation to the requirements of the particular *job to be filled.* If you are among the best qualified, your name will be referred to our office with names of other best qualified applicants. NOTE: If you are not selected, your name will go back on the list.

You cannot take your rating and apply directly to a Federal agency for employment with the following exception: Clerk-typists must take an OPM written test, but they can bring the results directly to us and apply. However, if you have 18 months clerical experience, you do not have to take the test. If you have to obtain an OPM clerk-typist rating, ask to be rated at every grade you are willing to accept. This office cannot accept applications from you for a position if you do not have an OPM rating for the particular grade level of the position. OPM's address is:

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
1900 E. Street N. W., Room 1416
Washington, DC 20415
(202) 653-8468

Remember: Even if a notice of rating is not required for the position, all candidates must meet the necessary qualifications of the desired job, in order to receive consideration.

A GUIDE FOR ALL APPLICANTS
HOW TO APPLY

Many positions are filled through VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS which are posted in this office. Shortened VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS can be found in *The Castle* (Fort Belvoir Newspaper), *Pentagram-News*, Virginia Employment Office, Veterans offices, offices on the post and most Federal agencies in the Washington, DC metro area.

To apply for positions at Ft. Belvoir, you must know: (1) *whether the position is open to you* (who may apply may be restricted), (2) *do you have the qualifications to be considered for the position*, (3) *is the announcement still open and are applications being accepted*, (4) *have you completed the necessary forms.*

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE? Federal jobs have various restrictions on who may apply. Your eligibility is determined by your current employment status. If you have never worked in a Federal position, then you are a NON-STATUS applicant. To find your eligibility, begin with BLOCK 1 on the following chart. This will tell you your current status. Proceed to the appropriate area in BLOCK 2. There you will find your eligibility status. Continue to BLOCK 3 which describes the eligibility categories you fall under. Then check the "WHO MAY APPLY" section of the VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT to see if you are eligible. If you are, then proceed. If not, then keep looking.

ARE YOU QUALIFIED? Federal regulations spell out to prospective Federal employees what experience, education and training an applicant needs in order to have his/her application considered for employment. These regulations are written on each VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT under the "QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS" section. Check them to see if you meet the requirements. If you meet them, then proceed.

ARE YOU TOO LATE? Check the "CLOSING DATE" section in the upper right hand corner of the VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT to see if we are accepting applications. If the date has not passed, then fill out the appropriate forms and hand carry or mail them to this office.

ARE YOU PREPARED? Make sure that you have completed the necessary forms required by the VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT. Mail application(s) to:

CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OFFICE
RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT DIVISION
BLDG 1001
USAEC&FB
FORT BELVOIR, VA 22060-5206

Read on - more information follows.

KEY

GS - General Schedule Pay Scale
WG - Wage Grade Pay Scale

BLOCK I APPLICANTS CURRENT STATUS	BLOCK II ELIGIBILITY STATUS	BLOCK III WHO MAY APPLY
IF YOU:	**THEN YOUR STATUS IS:**	**& YOU MAY APPLY FOR JOBS OPEN TO:**
1. NEVER HELD A PERMANENT FEDERAL POSITION 2. ARE/WERE EMPLOYED WITH NONAPPROPRIATED FUNDS (NAF) 3. ARE A TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE	NON-STATUS	- NON-STATUS - APPLICANT SUPPLY FILE - MOST TEMPORARY POSITIONS UP TO GS-12 (IF ANNOUNCED) - ALL TEMPORARY WG POSITIONS (IF ANNOUNCED) - SCHEDULE B & C - NAF JOBS (BLDG 1011), - ARMY AIR FORCE EXCHANGE SERVICE (AAFES), CONTRACTORS
4. ARE A PERMANENT FEDERAL EMPLOYEE (in the Competitive Service)	CAREER-CONDITIONAL OR CAREER	ANY POSITION
5. PREVIOUSLY HELD PERMANENT POSITION WHICH ENTITLES APPLICANT TO REINSTATEMENT	REINSTATEMENT ELIGIBLES	ANY POSITION
6. ARE A VIETNAM ERA VET BETWEEN 8/5/64 & 5/7/75	VETERAN (See Pamphlets)	ANY POSITION UP TO GS-9
7. VET WITH 30% OR MORE SERVICE RELATED DISABILITY		ANY POSITION

THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS GENERAL IN NATURE AND THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS.

MORE EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

1. There are also other types of employment opportunities available at Fort Belvoir. However, since these positions are not filled by the CPO, employment information must be obtained directly from the offices identified below:

a. *Nonappropriated Fund (NAF) Employment:* Fort Belvoir has approximately 450 NAFI employees currently working on post. Applicants who wish to be considered for NAF positions should call or visit the Fort Belvoir NAF Division, Civilian Personnel Office, Building 1011, second floor, telephone 703-664-3465, or 780-0955, to obtain an application and submit completed DA Form 3433, Nonappropriated Fund Application for Employment. The following positions are frequently available: Child Care Attendants, Waiters, Food Service Workers, Janitors, Laborers (Package Beverage Branch), Package Store Clerks (Package Beverage Branch) and Clerk-typists.

b. *Post Exchange (PX):* Applicants seeking employment with the Army and Air Force Exchange Services should report to the Personnel Office for Army and Air Force Exchange Service, Building 1150, Gunston Road, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, 22060, (telephone 703-780-0944).

c. *Banks and Credit Union:* The United Virginia Bank has two (2) branch banks located at Fort Belvoir. Applications for employment with this bank should be addressed to: United Virginia Bank, 515 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 (telephone 703-838-3000).

Applicants may pick up an application for employment at the Belvoir Credit Union, Building 1195, Gunston Road and 12th Street, Fort Belvoir, Virginia (telephone 703-781-7010).

d. *Contractor Employment:* There are several contractors who perform services on post. One performs building/housing maintenance (#1). The others perform custodial services and one provides mess hall attendants (#4).

1. DynaLectron, Theote St. Bldg 743, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060, 780-2849
2. Maintenance Pace Setters, 2603 Mt Vernon Ave, Alex, VA 22301, 836-5900
3. Centennial One Inc., 2411 Crofton Lane, Crofton, MD 21114, 261-0405
4. Arthur A. Fletcher Assoc. Inc., 516 G. St. SW., Washington, DC 20073, 833-3516

2. Other military installations or civilian Federal agencies can be found in the surrounding area:

a. The Civilian Personnel Office address for *US Army Corps of Engineer* activities located at Fort Belvoir is: Commander, US Army Corps of Engineers, Operating Civilian Personnel Office, ATTN: DAEN-PEO-K, Humphreys Engineer Center, Fort Belvoir, Virginia 22060 (telephone 703-355-2211).

b. *Defense Systems Management College* is located at Fort Belvoir. Their Civilian Personnel Office address is: Civilian Personnel Office, Hoffman Building II, Room 1539, Alexandria, Virginia 22332-0800 (telephone 703-325-8841), or Job Recording, 325-0763).

Addresses for other Federal agencies may be located under US Government in local telephone directories.

3. *Schoolteacher information.* There are three (3) elementary schools located on post (Grades K-6). They are part of the Fairfax County school system and are filled by the County Superintendent of Public Schools. Applications should be submitted to the following address: Personnel Services, 6815 Edsall Road, Springfield, Virginia 22151 (telephone 703-750-8545).

4. *State Employment Office:* The nearest State Employment Office is located at: Virginia Job Services, 386 S. Pickett St., Alexandria, VA 22304 (telephone 703-823-4135). They offer employment opportunities in many career fields.

5. *Fairfax County Employment Office:* 4103 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, VA 22030 (telephone 703-691-4600).

6. *Army Community Service Office (ACS):*

a. Although the Education and Employment Resource Center (EERC) provides services primarily to family members from all military services in the metropolitan area, anyone can use their facilities. Services available include education and employment counseling, information and referral, local volunteer/skills/job banks with current listings, recurring two-day seminars on life/career planning with follow-up workshops, an education and employment resource library, and outreach programs on request. EERC is located in Building 1474, 4th and Chapec (off Gunston Road) Fort Belvoir, VA (telephone 703-664-6995).

b. Volunteers are always needed for the ACS Volunteer Association which is located in Building 1169 on Middleton Road, Fort Belvoir, VA (telephone 703-664-3965). Both buildings are in operation from 7:45 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

SF-171 INFORMATION

Here are some frequently asked questions about the SF 171:

WHAT IS A SF-171?

It is the Federal government's basic job application. This Standard Form (SF) gives you an opportunity to put into words your experience, education, training and background. Take the time to fill it out properly. It represents you.

DO I FILL IN ALL THE BLANKS?

Yes. Unless the form says not to fill them in. If you do not know the answer write/type in "UNKNOWN." If the question does not apply, write/type in "N/A" or "NOT APPLICABLE." If you are willing to take any grade or pay in order to get a Federal job, then write/type "OPEN" in block 13. Be sure you sign and date the copy you are submitting. Make sure all information is current, especially your address and telephone number.

CAN I PHOTOCOPY MY SF-171?

Yes. By all means photocopy. Machines are located in the library and Post Office. Keep the original yourself and present one copy for each job for which you wish to apply. Do not fill in blocks #1, #2, the signature block, and the date block on your original. Complete those blocks on your photocopy for each job for which you apply.

DO I NEED TO INCLUDE THE JOB ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER AND JOB TITLE?

Yes. If you do not put this information on your application, then the Personnel Office has no idea what job you are applying for and cannot process your application.

HOW DO I PRESENT MY BACKGROUND?

Take your pertinent experience, education and training and trim all excess words. Highlight skills, responsibilities and major duties. If your position involves a variety of duties, list percentages of time. Organize your information so that it is smooth, understandable and readable. The reviewer may not know acronyms or other abbreviations. Your work experience and education are compared to the experience and education requirements outlined in the government qualification standards. There is a standard for

each job. The standards tell us what kinds of experience and education may be accepted. If your application does not show the required experience/education, you will not be eligible for employment in that particular job. The Vacancy Announcements describe the qualification requirements.

HOW MUCH EDUCATION INFORMATION SHOULD I SUPPLY?

Provide complete information concerning your education. List all colleges and other schools you have attended in addition to grammar and high school. Show the number of semester/quarter hours of credit you obtained in your primary/secondary subjects. If you have transcripts, you should submit a copy with your application. Undergraduate work is described in one place and graduate work is to be shown separately. Don't confuse or combine this information.

DOES VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE COUNT?

Yes. Just because you weren't paid for work that you did doesn't mean that you didn't do it. In other words, volunteer experience can be counted as creditable experience. The key to describing volunteer experience is to include the number of hours you worked and the percentage of time you spent at different activities. Don't forget to list a supervisor. If you remember that volunteer work is just the same as paid work, and describe it the same way you would paid work, you will have done it correctly. When crediting volunteer experience for specific occupations, the experience earned must be pertinent to the position for which you are applying.

WHAT DO I DO WITH MY COMPLETED SF-171?

It depends. Most jobs require that you contact the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) first and obtain a rating and have your name entered on their register. In other instances, you can apply directly to the hiring agency through the Civilian Personnel Office Recruitment and Placement Branch (see the "PERMANENT POSITIONS" section for more information).

DO MANY PEOPLE APPLY FOR FEDERAL JOBS?

Yes. At Fort Belvoir, we process more than 100 applications daily. The competition is tough, so keep your options open (a lower grade, a temporary position, etc.).

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I AM ONE OF THE BEST QUALIFIED APPLICANTS?

Your name will be referred with the other best qualified applicants to the selecting supervisor and your application will be sent to the supervisor for review. He/she may make the selection decision based solely on the applications provided. Interviews may be conducted, but they are not required. NOTE: Many jobs are filled without interviews when the supervisor can make the selection based on the application and when a personal interview is not expected to cause a change of mind. So, you can see that your application must be completed carefully, accurately and neatly. We must rely on YOUR description of YOUR experience and education when we compare your experience/education to the requirements of the job for which you applied. Supervisors may make the selection decision based on what you write on your application.

Developing a Good Work Image

One of the points you want to establish is your ability to produce on the job. Because of this, it's mandatory that you launch your hunt for a better job by doing outstanding work where you are right now. This applies equally to the general attitude you show in your job as well as the manner in which you handle the work itself.

As an example of how *NOT* to succeed, consider some of the people you see regularly in the course of a career. There's the obnoxious wheeler-dealer who talks an impressive line and makes it plain that he thinks he should be president of the company. He's so busy creating the impression of importance that he doesn't have much time left to do his job.

Then there's the person who finds fault with just about everybody. Although he's quite capable, he has developed his powers of being disagreeable to a personal specialty. There's also the drudge who seems to find a peculiar pleasure in being overworked. Everyone takes advantage of him because he lets it happen. In fact, he encourages an identification as a faithful, old workhorse.

All of these familiar types are convinced that they deserve better things in a job. But they have little chance of advancement because of the way they handle themselves in their present jobs.

Unfortunately, there can be a little bit of all these personalities in each of us. These attitudes often crop up in dissatisfactions on the job and, if allowed to go unchecked, they can stifle the best ambitions. When you think about how you're going to get a better job, include a serious and realistic evaluation of your present performance, how you get along with your co-workers and how your attitudes affect the total picture. Far too many people experience failure because they can't or won't learn to function cooperatively.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

How you handle yourself in interviews is of the utmost importance. Often it is the single most decisive test you will have to meet.

Attitude

Part of your preparation should include taking a long, hard look at your attitude. If you are intimidated, hostile, resentful, panicky or discouraged about looking for a job, it's going to show. Such feelings clearly have a negative effect on your chances, whatever your qualifications. Concentrate on your enthusiasm and interest. Be positive about yourself and the job. If you do this kind of homework, you'll be far more confident and poised during an interview.

Appearance

Consider your appearance carefully. Interviewers are human too. Your clothes and grooming are significant factors in their first impression of you. Even though we live in a progressive era of popular fashion, some general guidelines are necessary. It comes down to the basic good sense of following the lead of those already employed in the community.

Basically, avoid overelaborate hairstyles, makeup, jewelry and accessories. Self-expression in your appearance is out of place at this particular point. Your aim is to make the most favorable impression you can and be comfortable during the interview. That's next to impossible if you suddenly find yourself facing someone who dislikes radical styles anytime, much less for an interview.

Needless to say, your grooming must be scrupulous. Any hint of carelessness is easily translated to mean similarly slipshod work habits. This sort of thinking may be unfair, but it's still the usual reaction of most business and military members.

Research

Another type of preparation that can put you way out in front of the competition is a little research into your prospective employer's business. At some time during the interview, you will be expected to provide either a direct or implied answer to the question of why the interviewer should hire you. If you are primed with some general knowledge of what the employer's function is, you can score points for yourself. Conversely, an applicant who is obviously ignorant of the broader aspects of a particular work situation appears unenthusiastic, even improperly prepared. Good sources of information include: sponsors, neighbors and friends, and CPO staff.

The Final Touch

Finally, there's the matter of transportation and schedule preparations. This includes such easily overlooked details as checking on the exact location of any appointments, what the travel time may be and how to pronounce the names of the people you are to see. The more things you can deal with in advance, the more likely you will have a smooth, productive interview.

THE INTERVIEW

Examine the quality of your manners, voice, language and appearance. Those who conduct personnel interviews understand that you are under a strain and make allowances for the difficulties of the situation. But don't push them too far with such distractions as mumbling, nonstop fidgeting or giggling.

If this is your first job-hunting experience and you're unsure of your ability to make a good impression, try some informal rehearsing before going on an interview. A family member or a good friend can also give you worthwhile pointers about correcting any unattractive

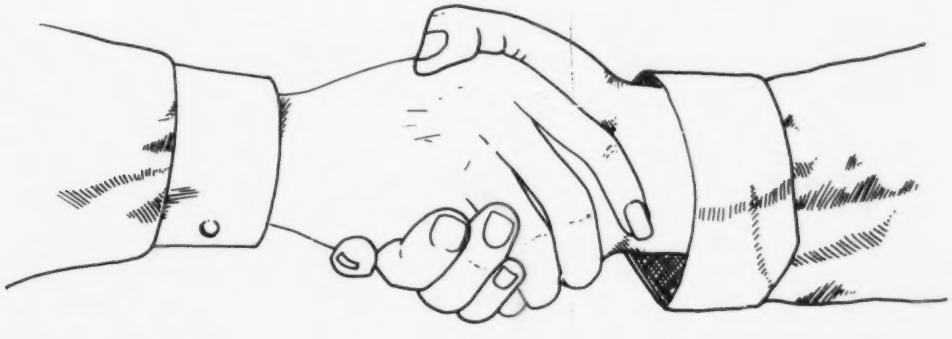
mannerisms you may not realize you have. Many people find that rehearsing in front of a mirror is helpful (after the initial awkwardness disappears).

An interview means questions. Anticipating the obvious ones, you can have your answers ready. Your responses to all questions should be prompt, candid and concise. *Monopolizing the conversation is bad.* So are answers which tend to make you sound too timid or shy. Maintain a positive and enthusiastic attitude.

At some point during an interview, you may be questioned about a shortcoming in your qualifications. Answer any such query honestly, but don't volunteer such information on your own. This is an interview, not a confessional.

If you decide you would like the job, by all means say so. You may not get the answer you want right on the spot, but you can't afford to appear indifferent. If you are turned down, accept the decision gracefully. This is also the time to inquire about the possibilities of future vacancies. It's worth trying if only to establish your image as a person who isn't easily discouraged. Persistence, as long as it isn't overdone, is one of the qualities employers look for.

When the interview is over, be sure to thank the interviewer for his/her time and consideration. After you leave, take time to see where you functioned well and how you might have done better. Assessing your interview performance while it is still fresh in your mind will help you perfect your techniques on the next interview.



ADVANCEMENT

If the idea of advancing in your present place of employment appeals to you, don't keep it a secret. Let your superiors know that you're interested in getting a better job. Don't depend on your record speaking for itself. Many bosses have to be nudged periodically.

Keep an eye on openings for other jobs that interest you. If your goal is in another organization, for instance, you should go on record with a request to be considered for any vacancy that occurs. When there is a job to be filled, make sure that you're in the running. Be eager, able and pleasantly persistent.

A FINAL NOTE

The more you understand the Federal employment system and the SF-171, the better your chances of employment become. In addition, applying for a job does not end with your application. It continues through the interview and into your employment. Keep a positive attitude and persist in your job search. It *can* make a difference.

HISTORY OF FORT BELVOIR

Belvoir history began in early Colonial times, when George Washington and his friend, George William Fairfax, rode horseback over the area. Even earlier, the Doeg and Piscataway Indians had camped along the Potomac River to hunt and fish. During the period 1736-1741, Colonel William Fairfax erected a spacious brick manor house, with extensive formal gardens, which he named "Belvoir", meaning, "beautiful to see."

In 1748, the 16-year-old George Washington came to Mount Vernon, his brother's home on the Potomac near Belvoir. He began a life long friendship with George William Fairfax, oldest son of the owner of Belvoir plantation. Washington was a frequent visitor to Belvoir, and his association with the Fairfax family significantly broadened and enriched his cultural, social and political perspectives.

The mansion burned to the ground in 1783, and the ruins were further demolished by British guns in 1814. Belvoir Manor was never rebuilt. The foundation ruins lie today 200 yards south of the end of Fairfax Drive at Fort Belvoir. In the same area, over the graves of Colonel William Fairfax and his wife, stands a stone memorial erected by their descendants.

In 1912, the War Department assigned to the Corps of Engineers 1500 acres of the Old Fairfax Plantation for use as a training site for Engineer troops stationed at Washington Barracks (now Fort McNair). In 1917, the Belvoir area was designated Camp A. A. Humphreys in honor of General Andrew Atkinson Humphreys, a Civil War officer who later became the Chief of Engineers. That same year the Army acquired the land that is now called North Post. At the time, the land was owned mostly by local farmers and churches.

During World War I, a training center for Engineer troops and an Engineer Officer Training School were established at Camp A. A. Humphreys. More than 57,000 Engineer soldiers were trained during the war. At the close of World War I, the Engineer School was moved here from Washington Barracks, and Camp A. A. Humphreys was redesignated Fort Humphreys. In 1935, it was renamed Fort Belvoir, after the manor house of Colonel Fairfax.

During World War II, a Replacement Training Center for Engineer troops was established at Fort Belvoir and trained 147,000 troops. At its inactivation in 1947, the "Engineer Center" was established. The name designation, "The Engineer Center and Fort Belvoir," came into being on January 1, 1957. Subsequent modifications resulted in the current title, "United States Army Engineer Center and Fort Belvoir."